

Message Text

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61

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 OMB-01 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08 GSA-01 OEP-01

MC-02 ACDA-19 GAC-01 RSR-01 /155 W
----- 116845

P R 191210 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2416

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ASMARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RW

SUBJ: GERMANY INQUIRY RE NORD- ATLAS AIRCRAFT AT KIGALI

REF: BUJUMBURA 0426 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: GERMANY EMBASSY BUJUMBURA HAD INQUIRED RE REPORTED PRESENCE BLK NORD- ATLAS TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT AT KIGALI AIRPORT. ONE SUCH AIRCRAFT ARRIVED KIGALI ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO. ACCORDING LOCAL AVIATION SOURCES PLANE CRASHED NEAR DJIBOUTI DURING NIGHT APRIL 17-18. LOCAL SPECULATION IS PLANE WAS INVOLVED IN SHADY BUSINESS. END SUMMARY.

2. GERMANY EMBASSY BUJUMBURA INQUIRED ABOUT REPORT OF PRESENCE FIVE NORD- ATLAS TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT AT KIGALI WHICH RUMORED TO HAVE REACHED KIGALI FROM GERMANY VIA MALTS (REFTEL). FROM LOCAL AVIATION SOURCES FOLLOWING
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STORY EMERGES:

A) APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS AGO ONE RPT ONE NORD- ATLAS (MODEL NUMBER NORD 2501) ARRIVED KIGALI FROM GERMANY PAINTED IN FRG AIR FORCE CAMOUFLAGE. AIRCRAFT'S OWNER REPORTED TO BE MALTESE NATIONAL NAMED DEBONO WHO HAD BOUGHT AIRCRAFT FROM FRG GOVERNMENT AND SET UP AIR CARGO COMPANY REGISTERED IN RWANDA. AIRCRAFT REGISTERED IN RWANDA. OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF COMPANY WAS TO SHIP RWANDAN TIN ORE, VEGETABLES AND FRUIT TO EUROPE. ACCORDING TO AVAILABLE INFORMATION, DEBONO HAD ALSO REGISTERED SECOND NORD- ATLAS IN RWANDA THROUGH SECOND AIRCRAFT STILL IN EUROPE.

B) ABOUT ONE WEEK AGO OWNERS BEGAN REPAINTING AIRCRAFT. REPAINTING NOT REPEAT NOT COMPLETED WHEN AIRCRAFT DEPARTED KIGALI SUDDENLY APRIL 17. AVIATION AUTHORITIES HERE RECEIVED TELEX APRIL 18 REPORTING XAIRCRAFT HAD CRASHED 0200 GMT APRIL 18 SHORTLY AFTER TAKEOFF FROM DJIBOUTI ON FLIGHT TO ASMARA. ONE CREW MEMBER REPORTEDLY SERIOUSLY INJURED, SECOND ONE LESS SO.

C) OWNER OF AIRCRAFT DEBONO REPORTEDLY STILL IN KIGALI.

3. AVIATION SOURCES HERE SPECULATE DEBONO VENTURE INVOLVES SHADY DEALINGS, POSSIBLY ARMS SMUGGLING, THOUGH DETAILS NOT KNOWN. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFO ADDRESSEES MAY HAVE.

4. ABOVE INFO SHARED WITH FRG EMBASSY HERE.
SHOSTAL

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TAGS: PFOR, RW
To: ADDIS ABABA
AF
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BUJUMBURA
MOGADISHU

SECSTATE WASHDC

VALLETTA

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